

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
Committee on Equal Opportunities  
June 19, 2006**

**Morehead State University  
Campus Visit Report**

**ACTION:** The Council staff recommends that the committee adopt the report of its campus visit conducted at Morehead State University April 17-18, 2006, and that the report be forwarded to the MoSU president along with a request that a report regarding its implementation be given at the October 16, 2006, CEO meeting.

The Committee on Equal Opportunities is charged with monitoring institutional progress toward implementing *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities* and the Partnership Agreement with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Monitoring is completed through data analysis and campus visits.

An outcome of the discussion with campus focus groups was a recommendation that the Committee on Equal Opportunities conduct a desk audit of its campus visit process to determine whether the process continues to be aligned with the original intent. Since the 1980s when the CEO was created and given its charge to oversee the implementation of the EEO plans, the desegregation and diversity landscape has undergone significant change, the membership of the committee has changed, and the leadership at the institutions have changed, thereby suggesting that the committee may benefit from examining its process and realigning its approach, if necessary, to ensure that the campus visits are serving the intended purpose.

The postsecondary system anticipates completing a statewide diversity study to guide the state's efforts under future EEO plans. The results of a desk audit could serve as the first step toward establishing a more responsive process for implementing more aggressive programs to increase and sustain a more diverse campus community. It is suggested that the committee examine its process prior to engaging in additional campus visits during fall 2006.

The CEO visited Morehead State University April 17-18, 2006, to meet with campus leaders, students, faculty, professional staff, and other members of the campus community. The meetings are designed to give committee members an opportunity to hear from selected members of the university community. Campus visits are not meant to gather scientific, empirical data, but rather to learn first-hand about the success of equal opportunity plan implementation on the MoSU campus.

Morehead State University is one of six comprehensive public postsecondary institutions that offer general and liberal arts programs at the undergraduate and master's level. The MoSU main campus is located in Morehead, Kentucky, and is easily accessed from other regions in the state. Morehead State University enrolls more than 9,000 students from 100 Kentucky counties, 42 states, and 37 nations. Students are enrolled at the Morehead campus, regional campuses in Ashland, Jackson, Mount Sterling, Prestonsburg, and West Liberty, and a variety of other locations in eastern Kentucky and across the globe through the World Wide Web. MoSU is recognized as one of the top 25 public universities in the South in both the 2005 and 2006 edition of "America's Best Colleges" by *U.S. News & World Report*.

The university mission statement affirms that MoSU is a diverse community of learners committed to student success. Under the leadership of President Wayne Andrews, the university developed and has begun implementing a new university diversity plan. The university diversity plan initiatives are incorporated into the University Strategic Plan. More than 120 members of the campus community were involved in developing the 45 objectives included in the plan that are intended to contribute to efforts to achieve the objectives of *The Kentucky Plan*.

Since the last CEO visit, MoSU has allocated additional resources to promote campus diversity as follows: cultural diversity programming, the Lexington and Louisville YMCA Black Achievers, admissions and marketing support, scholarships, the Black Gospel and Dance Ensembles, SREB minority faculty hires, assistant provost (stipend and budget), the teacher education "Trading Spaces," and community relations activities. The MoSU Campus Environment Team will oversee the plan. The CET membership is being expanded to achieve broader campus representation. The provost chairs the CET with the assistant provost for diversity providing staff support.

The diversity plan includes a variety of initiatives and programs. Its goals include: 1) minority student recruitment, 2) minority employment and retention, 3) diversity and teacher preparation, 4) diversity content in the curriculum, 5) campus environment and minority student retention, 6) community environment, 7) issues of governance, and 8) communication and education.

Some of the recommendations identified by the CEO as a result of the focus group discussions are highlighted below. (More detail is provided in the full report.)

### ***Recruitment, Enrollment, Advising, and Retention***

1. The university should consider conducting a desk audit of its advising policies and procedures and use the results to develop guidelines that are consistent campus wide. Students reported that the advising and support services are not consistent across departments. (It was noted that incoming freshmen appear to struggle because they are unable to connect with an effective support system. For example, students said that advising may take place in the freshman year, but many students are forced to seek support and guidance from upperclassmen as they move beyond the first-year experience).

2. The university should continue to use targeted marketing materials but also the materials should be integrated into the general marketing program of the university to ensure a consistent message regarding diversity being received by the public.
3. The university should create scholarship opportunities for transfer students from the community and technical colleges, and align scholarship policies with time to graduation, particularly if the average time to graduation is six years.
4. The university should use the detailed student retention data, by department and college, to develop or strengthen programs and strategies to increase retention and investigate the value of establishing a retention committee to focus exclusively on the retention of underrepresented minority groups at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

### ***Communication with Students, Faculty, and Staff***

1. As with students on many campuses, MoSU students said that they do not have, in a single location, clear information regarding the university's policies on loans and loan repayments, particularly as it relates to continued enrollment. The university should assist students by clearly communicating its policies to students.
2. The university should clearly communicate its policies regarding support services for events hosted by campus organizations. Some organizations believe that African American and white student organizations are treated differently when hosting events on campus. The university should post in a conspicuous place the policies that govern the provision of support services for campus events.
3. The university should create and distribute to students, faculty, and staff a directory describing services available and where to go to receive those services. Students seem to be confused as to which of the program areas identified by the university they should expect to address their concerns or seek assistance (admissions, the affirmative action office, equal opportunity office, the diversity office, the office of multicultural affairs, or their advisor).

### ***Employment and Career Advancement***

1. The committee strongly encourages the university to develop innovative strategies to increase the representation of African Americans at the highest level of policy development, particularly since such positions rarely become available.
2. The university should consider implementing a recognition and rewards program that publicly acknowledges the success of departments and colleges and deans and chairs for achieving diversity objectives, i.e., the recruitment and retention of African American faculty, students, and staff.

3. The president and provost should strongly consider holding deans and chairs accountable for achieving diversity during the formal evaluation through rewards and sanctions - this approach may help departments and colleges to view diversity as a stronger priority.

### ***Student Leaders and General Campus Issues***

1. Some students observed that MoSU, at the time of the visit, did not have African American professional staff in the financial aid office (this was puzzling because an African American professional staff person, in a different focus group session, noted his employment in the financial aid office). While any staff can and should provide these services, they strongly encourage the university to have more African Americans on staff in the financial aid office.
2. Communication seems to be at the root of many student concerns. Students believe that support services for minority students are more limited than services for other students. Students believe their access to critical support programs are somehow limited and affect their level of participation. To better inform students, the university should inventory and clearly communicate to all students, especially freshmen and transfer students, information regarding academic support services, financial aid, student organizations, the names, telephone numbers, and E-mail addresses of contact persons, and the location of faculty and staff charged with mentoring minority students. Other institutions provide a resource guide containing this information.

A representative of the university will be asked to give a status report on the implementation of the recommendations at the October 16, 2006, CEO meeting.

**Committee on Equal Opportunities  
Visit to Morehead State University  
Summary and Recommendations  
April 17-18, 2006**

Approved by the CEO:

**Executive Summary**

**Purpose and Process:** The purpose of the campus visit is to allow members of the Committee on Equal Opportunities to review institutional activities that support the objectives of *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities*. The CEO is charged with monitoring institutional progress toward implementing *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities* and the Partnership Agreement with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Monitoring is completed through data analysis and campus visits.

The CEO visited Morehead State University April 17-18, 2006, to meet with campus leaders, students, faculty, and other members of the campus community. The meetings were designed to give committee members an opportunity to hear from selected members of the university community. Campus visits are not meant to gather scientific, empirical data, but rather to learn first-hand about the success of equal opportunity plan implementation on the MoSU campus.

**Core Focus:** The CEO visit report begins by identifying the general focus for review and discussion with the university administration and the campus community. The committee's goal is to learn about the university's strategies and leadership in implementing the objectives of the plan and recommendations from the previous two campus visits and the results of those efforts.

**Report Summary:** Morehead State University is one of six comprehensive public postsecondary institutions. The main campus is located in Morehead, Kentucky. During fall 2005 the university enrolled more than 9,000 students from 100 Kentucky counties, 42 states, and 37 nations. Students are enrolled at the Morehead campus, extended campuses in Ashland, Jackson, Mount Sterling, Prestonsburg, West Liberty, and other locations in eastern Kentucky. MoSU is recognized as one of the top 25 public universities in the South in both the 2005 and 2006 edition of "America's Best Colleges" by *U.S. News & World Report*.

The university mission statement affirms that Morehead State University is a diverse community of learners committed to student success. In January 2005, Dr. Wayne Andrews came to Morehead as president. Just prior to his arrival, the university completed and began implementing a new university diversity plan. Also, the university's new diversity initiatives are incorporated in the university strategic plan.

Both documents are available on the MoSU website. More than 120 members of the campus community were involved in the formulation of the 45 objectives included in the new plan that are intended to contribute to efforts to achieve the objectives of *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities*.

The university's presentation to the CEO highlighted some of the program changes and improvements since the most recent campus visit, resulting in varying degrees of success. President Andrews noted his commitment to the objectives of the Kentucky plan and to the objectives outlined in HB1. Under his leadership, recurring funding has been dedicated to support a variety of diversity initiatives over the next three years. Dr. Andrew's vision for the university also is identified in the MoSU strategic plan, *Aspiring to Greatness 2006-2010*. Within the strategic plan are six strategic goals related to campus diversity, four of which have been given a higher priority for implementation to increase the level of success toward campus diversity: (1) commitment to the Black Gospel Ensemble and cultural programming, (2) improve communications among African American faculty and staff, (3) continued support to include African Americans in the President's Cabinet, and (4) the recruitment and hiring of African American faculty.

Since the last CEO visit, MoSU has allocated additional resources to promote campus diversity as follows: cultural diversity programming, the Lexington and Louisville YMCA Black Achievers, admissions and marketing support, scholarships, the Black Gospel and Dance Ensembles, SREB minority faculty hires, assistant provost (stipend and budget), the teacher education "Trading Spaces," and community relations activities. Approximately \$900,000 over three years is committed to support the aforementioned initiatives. The MoSU Campus Environment Team will oversee the plan. The CET membership is being expanded to achieve broader campus representation. The provost chairs the CET, with staff support from the assistant provost for diversity.

Of particular note is the stated intent of the president to implement strategies that will establish a full-time affirmative action officer with re-defined and results oriented responsibilities; and review and re-align overlapping responsibilities of the director of multicultural student services, the assistant director of multicultural student services and the minority retention coordinator. If these actions are quickly implemented and the director of multicultural student services can spend more time interfacing with students many of the concerns raised by students may immediately be resolved. Other institutions have made it a practice to sever the positions of affirmative action officer and the responsibilities associated with equal opportunity programming.

The diversity plan includes a variety of initiatives and programs. Its goals include: 1) minority student recruitment, 2) minority employment and retention, 3) diversity and teacher preparation, 4) diversity content in the curriculum, 5) campus environment and minority student retention, 6) community environment, 7) issues of governance, and 8) communication and education.

The minority student recruitment goal includes seven strategies, two of the seven strategies have been completed, one is currently pending, and four are works in progress. For example, the university redirects scholarships to high potential minority prospects and targets recruitment and marketing activities to areas with significant minority populations, especially in or near Morehead's service region. Also, the university will aggressively seek grants to support minority recruitment, scholarships, research, and study initiatives. Additional activities include: compilation of campus diversity resources for a Web site for recruitment and marketing purposes, compilation of research data from current minority students and prospects to plan future minority recruitment activities, coordination of efforts between Academic Affairs, Student Life, and the Affirmative Action Office to recruit minority students, and strategic use of the Black Gospel Ensemble to recruit minority students from local, regional, and metropolitan/rural public schools.

The second goal, minority employment and retention, has ten strategies. Three have been completed, while seven are works in progress. Accomplished strategies include establishing responsibilities for the Assistant Provost for Diversity, regular attendance at the SREB Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute and other minority faculty and graduate student recruitment fairs, and training workshops for chairs, directors, and search committee members regarding recruitment and employment strategies. Seven additional initiatives and strategies were described as works in progress at the time of the CEO visit.

Diversity and teacher preparation, the third goal, highlighted four strategies; two are works in progress and two were pending at the time of the CEO visit. (As used in this report, "pending" refers to actions that are nearing completion but not yet fully implemented.) The four strategies emphasize increased diversity of MoSU's faculty, retention of faculty, evaluating the curriculum and experiences, and documenting and expanding diversity-related field and clinical experiences with the P-12 system.

The fourth goal, diversity content in the curriculum, highlights five strategies, three of which have been completed: establish and allocate recurring funds to an Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies Program; organize and conduct a campuswide interdisciplinary series of lectures, workshops, and seminars on issues of diversity; and increase inclusion of diversity content in instructional or training resources for the diversity component of MoSU 101. One strategy is pending and the final strategy was described as a work in progress.

The campus environment and minority student retention is the focus of goal five. This goal's five strategies promote a community of inclusiveness. Currently, one strategy is complete - the integration of the Black Gospel Ensemble into the Department of Music and the allocation of an annual operating budget. At the time of the CEO visit, two additional objectives were pending, and two were described as works in progress. Plans were underway to establish "Ethnic Dialogues" as a campuswide diversity training model for faculty, staff, and students. Also, a campuswide faculty and staff

mentoring program for all minority freshmen and transfer students was being established. The university plans to expand the facilities that house Multicultural Student Services and to organize an annual scholarship and awards banquet to recognize individuals who have successfully mentored and retained minority students.

The sixth goal relates to the community environment; of the six supporting strategies, three are pending, and three were described as works in progress.

Goal seven provides a structure to govern implementation of the diversity plan. One strategy is complete – an implementation team co-chaired by the Provost and Vice President for Student Life to manage the implementation process and provide financial resources. Two additional strategies are pending, and two were described as works in progress.

Finally, the eighth goal, communication and education, highlight three strategies. One is pending, and the remaining two were described as works in progress.

The president stated that MoSU is working to foster a community of inclusiveness and the campus community supports the institution's vision and goals. Underscoring the description of the plan as a living document, the university identified several areas where improvements will be made: recruitment and retention of African American faculty, developing and nurturing the relationship between students and the university community, and the need to address students' reality versus their perception.

Information provided by the focus group discussions confirmed the impressions given by the general presentation that the university is making steady improvement and progress towards the objectives of *The Kentucky Plan*. However, comments also indicated that there are areas that, if strengthened, will yield greater levels of university accomplishment, campus diversity, student satisfaction, and support by faculty and staff for increased diversity.

Similar to other institutions, MoSU strategies to implement recommendations from the 1998 and 2000 reports reveal varying degrees of success. For example, MoSU created a university strategic plan, *Aspiring to Greatness 2006-2010* that serves as a framework to strengthen the effort to increase diversity. In 2006, MoSU was recognized as one of the best regional universities in the South, and among the top 25, according to *U.S. News and World Report*. The president noted two values embraced by the university community: putting people first and respect for diversity. Six strategic goals, four of which address diversity specifically, were prominent in the MoSU presentation to CEO: 1) Black Gospel Ensemble and Cultural Programming, 2) improved communications of African Americans, 3) inclusion of diversity on the presidents' cabinet, and 4) in 2006, 11 African American faculty are employed in tenure track positions. (At the time of the visit four additional African Americans were competing at various levels of the MoSU employment process. The university was hopeful that they too would be successful and join the MoSU family as faculty.)



Other efforts highlighted by President Andrews include: 1) reviewing recruitment and retention initiatives for African Americans; 2) action-oriented programs as part of the action-oriented plans, two with a focus on the recruitment of faculty and staff, and two with a focus on retention initiatives; 3) a new cities initiative with the League of Cities; 4) Campus Environment Team/Affirmative Action Committee - in 2002 the CET conducted a campus wide survey with the Chamber of Commerce; and 5) the 2002 campus climate survey was distributed to the community and recommendations were made to maintain the community committee.

The university noted that the Multicultural Student Services Building was established for African American students. The office also assists with the organization of the African American Alumni Group. President Andrews has provided significant leadership in promoting diversity across the campus.

Access to postsecondary education is essential to building opportunities that lead to long-term career achievement, a self-sufficient citizenry, and increased economic development within diverse communities. From 1995 to 1998, MOSU showed some progress in the enrollment of African Americans as undergraduates (a record enrollment of 233 students was noted in 1998); however, from 1999 to 2004, African American undergraduate enrollment fluctuated. To improve the university's success in increasing the representation of minority students on campus and to increase student retention, MoSU has pledged additional resources for scholarships and cultural diversity programming.

Collaborative opportunities such as the College of Education's partnership with Kentucky State University also may be advantageous in helping to increase minority representation in the education program, in addition to nurturing relationships between minority students and MoSU in disciplines throughout the university. MoSU also could benefit from establishing and strengthening its relationship with institutions in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. Currently, KCTCS serves as the point of entry to postsecondary education for many Kentucky residents, including African Americans. MoSU can realize additional diversity among its undergraduate student population by the development, promotion, and implementation of practices that support successful transfer from KCTCS institutions.

MoSU is experiencing significant difficulty with the retention of Kentucky resident African American students. The retention of resident African American undergraduates increased between fall 1995 and 1996, but decreased between 1997 and 1999. The rate increased again in fall 2000, and has fluctuated between 2001 and 2004. The retention of first-year African American students fluctuated between 1995 and 2001 and showed a decline for each year between 2002 and 2004. Statistical analysis of the six-year graduation rate for degree-seeking residents indicates that more emphasis is needed in this area; the rate fluctuated (up and down) greatly between 1995 and 2004. Both the retention of African American students and the six year graduation

rates continue to be a challenge for MoSU. The university has experienced limited success in the enrollment of African Americans in graduate programs from 2000 to 2004.

While experiencing a moderate level of success attracting African Americans to the MoSU campus, the university has had difficulty maintaining its diversity. Two African Americans were employed at the executive level between 1995 and 2003. In 2004-05 one African American held an executive level position. The employment and retention of African Americans as faculty continues to be a challenge for MoSU. The committee recognized the tremendous effort and success of MoSU to attract African American faculty to the MoSU campus, but noted the lack of correlation of these efforts with retention. After experiencing fluctuations between 1995 and 2001, MoSU is experiencing a gradual increase in African American faculty (2002-2005). Administrators noted that 15 African Americans, a record number, are currently employed as faculty at MoSU.

And finally, the employment of African Americans as professionals has gradually increased since 2000. Currently, 15 African Americans are employed as professional staff. The committee recognizes that high-level positions within an organization do not frequently become available but encourages MoSU to pursue innovative opportunities to increase African American representation at all levels.

### **Recommendations by the CEO**

#### ***Recruitment, Enrollment, Advising, and Retention***

1. The university should consider conducting a desk audit of its policy implementation strategies to ensure that they are implemented consistently campuswide. The university provided evidence that a sound policy structure is in place, but lacked evidence that the policies are being implemented as envisioned. For example, some students reported that the advising services vary among departments. They suggested that often students are allowed by advisors to enroll in courses that are not consistent with their declared degree program and discipline. The university notes that students have a number of tools available to assist them to plan their academic career.
2. The university should continue to use targeted marketing materials but the materials should be integrated into the general marketing program to ensure a consistent message.
3. The minority student representation from urban areas at MoSU has increased, but representation from its 22-county service region continues to lag; the university should identify strategies to market and attract additional minority students from the service region.

4. The university should strengthen the use of student retention data within departments and colleges as a tool to help strengthen or realign retention programs and strategies.
5. The university should consider linking several key programs/services (degree audit, faculty advising, and retention) to produce an official outcome that informs students of their status toward fulfilling the requirements for graduation particularly in the junior and senior year. A formal process should be established for notifying students of their status.
6. The university should review and affirm its policy regarding graduate program scholarships and teaching assistantships to ensure that departments understand and implement those policies consistently. To attract and retain more minority students, MoSU policies should be competitive with awards offered by other institutions.
7. The university should encourage administrators to routinely employ diversity training for staff that regularly interfaces with students to ensure that the campus environment remains free of hostile interactions. Some students indicated that some service areas were reluctant to provide needed services in a supportive and caring environment.
8. The university graduate school should implement strategies that identify and enroll students from the MoSU undergraduate programs, in addition to looking outside the university.

### ***Communications with Students, Faculty, and Staff***

1. As with students on many campuses, MoSU students said that they do not have, in a single location, clear information regarding the university's policies on loans and loan repayments, particularly as it relates to continued enrollment. The university should assist students by clearly communicating its policies.
2. The university should clearly communicate its policies regarding support services for events hosted by campus organizations. Some organizations believe that African American and white student organizations are treated differently when hosting events on campus. The university should post in a conspicuous place the policies that govern the provision of support services for campus events.
3. The university should create and distribute to students, faculty, and staff a directory describing services available and where to go to receive those services. Students seem to be confused as to which of the program areas identified by the university they should expect to address their concerns or seek assistance (admissions, the affirmative action office, equal opportunity office, the diversity office, the office of multicultural affairs, or their advisor).

4. Students believe that representation of African Americans in the honors program should be strengthened. It is suggested that the program be marketed more strongly as students are recruited and among freshmen when they arrive at the university.
5. The university's marketing strategies should incorporate more opportunities to highlight the success of African American alumni as a recruiting tool; similar to the use of successful athletes to attract high school recruits. Ask alumni to use their personal relationships to assist the university to recruit the best and the brightest.
6. Both the Caudill School of Humanities and the College of Education seem to have developed and implemented model programs to increase student and faculty diversity and create an inviting and supportive environment for students and faculty that should be replicated by other departments and colleges.

### ***Employment and Career Advancement***

1. The committee strongly encourages the university to develop innovative strategies to increase the representation of African Americans at the highest level of policy development, particularly since such positions rarely become available.
2. The university should consider implementing a recognition and rewards program that publicly acknowledges the success of departments and colleges and deans and chairs for achieving diversity objectives, i.e., the recruitment and retention of African American faculty, students, and staff.
3. The president and provost should strongly consider holding deans and chairs accountable for achieving diversity during the formal evaluation through rewards and sanctions - this approach may help departments and colleges to view diversity as a stronger priority.
4. The committee encourages the university to realign the current mentoring program used to assist selected junior faculty and staff interested in career advancement or completion of the terminal degree to more readily support long-term aspirations at MoSU.
5. The university is encouraged to strategically use ethnic dialogues, lectures, and other speaking engagements to move the university community toward embracing and catering to a more diverse campus.

### ***Student Leaders and General Campus Issues***

1. Some students observed that MoSU, at the time of the visit, did not have African American professional staff in the financial aid office. (This was an interesting observation by students. In a separate focus group an African American male indicated that his place of employment is the financial aid office.). While any staff can and should provide these services, the students strongly encourage the

university to add more Americans to the staff in the financial aid office. Students believe that the absence of minorities in this office impacts African American students' access to resources.

2. Communication seems to be at the root of many student concerns. Students believe that support services for minority students are more limited than services for other students. Students believe their access to critical support programs are somehow limited and affect their level of participation.

To better inform students, the university should inventory and clearly communicate to all students, especially freshmen and transfer students, information regarding academic support services, financial aid, student organizations, the names, telephone numbers, and E-mail addresses of contact persons, and the location of faculty and staff charged with mentoring minority students. Other institutions provide a resource guide containing this information.

3. Students believe that more support staff and resources should be provided to the office of multi-cultural student services to enhance support programs that serve African American and other minority students.
4. Students believe that the university may reap tremendous benefits from surveying graduating students to better understand how they feel about the university as they depart –the results could be used to realign policies that affect student services and the interaction among faculty and staff.
5. Some students indicated that they would be reluctant to advise their friends to attend the university while others indicated that they would. The university might benefit from hosting a student forum to glean better information about the statements made by students.

### **Recommendations or Concerns to the CEO**

1. The CEO should ask the Kentucky Department of Education to encourage high schools to provide better access to juniors and seniors for purposes of college recruitment. The most difficult time to gain access to students is during the spring semester.
2. The CEO should work with institutions and the Kentucky Department of Education to identify ways to assist institutions to build data bases of potential minority students during their career in middle school. Some school counselors exhibit hostile attitudes when recruiters seek to identify and interface with minority students.
3. The CEO should conduct a desk audit of its process for conducting campus visits to determine whether the process continues to be aligned with the original intent.

Since the 1980s when the CEO was created and given its charge to oversee the implementation of the EEO plans, the desegregation and diversity landscape has undergone significant change, the membership of the committee has changed, and the leadership at the institutions have changed, thereby suggesting that the committee may benefit from examining its process and realign its approach, if necessary, to ensure that the campus visits are serving the intended purpose.

The system anticipates completing a statewide diversity study to guide state's efforts under future EEO plans. The results of a desk audit could serve as the first step toward establishing a more responsive process for implementing more aggressive programs to increase and sustain a more diverse campus community. It is suggested that the committee examine its process prior to engaging in additional campus visits during fall 2006.

### **Discussions with Constituent and Focus Groups**

**President and Leadership Team:** The highest priority of *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities* and the Partnership Agreement with the U. S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is to create campus and community environments that are inviting and supportive of diverse student, faculty, and staff populations.

President Wayne Andrews and university administrators highlighted MoSU's strategic plan and presented information regarding programs and initiatives that have been implemented to achieve the objectives and commitments outlined in *The Kentucky Plan* and the Partnership Agreement. The president discussed initiatives that have been implemented since his tenure. The president indicated that strategies undertaken in the last two years accentuate the value of diversity and that four of six institutional strategic goals are directed at achieving greater degrees of diversity across the university.

Ms. Botts-Butler and other MoSU staff discussed the university's diversity plan and its role in assisting the university to increase diversity across the campus, and provided detail regarding initiatives to recruit and retain both African American faculty and students. Ms. Botts-Butler noted that the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program, the SREB Institute, and the most recent increase in African American doctoral scholars have made significant contributions to the institution's success identifying potential faculty. Special scholarship and outreach programs are being considered as tools to attract more students to the university. While the president's vision is to encourage the entire campus community to embrace diversity, there may however be special opportunities for educational outreach. It was noted that the vast majority of the campus community embrace diversity not as a problem, but as a challenge. The university seeks to further solidify its vision through partnerships, collaborations, curriculum review, and the use of internal and external resources to support diversity initiatives.

**Admission, Recruitment, and Retention:** The Office of Enrollment Services is responsible for providing students with accurate information to assist them in determining whether MoSU will provide the kind of environment that will enable them to successfully meet their educational and career goals. The university has established various marketing and support programs for minority students.

The university stated that Kentucky African American student enrollment at MoSU has increased, but the population characteristics within the 22-county service area makes it very difficult to recruit African American students. Diversity within the student body is enhanced by the institution's ability to recruit in urban areas or in locations outside Kentucky. The university targets specific areas to recruit students and provides special tuition discounts for students in those areas. More funds for scholarships are needed to help the university meet its objective to provide access for all students in its service area. The university has placed special recruiters in areas such as Jefferson and Fayette counties to focus recruitment efforts. While the university's immediate efforts are primarily directed at seniors, students in grades 9-11 also are identified and given information about MoSU. MoSU recruiters are experiencing difficulty, particularly during the spring semester, gaining access to students through the normal channels, i.e., by scheduling recruiting visits – counselors are reluctant to allow these visits.

MoSU created an ad hoc enrollment and recruitment task group to offer recommendations to improve the recruitment, admission, and retention process. One suggestion is that as the university makes decisions regarding admission, the student should be contacted to ensure that she will attend MoSU. The diversity programs support the recruitment efforts by providing programs and interacting with African American students. There are several challenges that impact the success of the recruitment program: a) absence of an African American professional in the financial aid office (this is seen as having a profound impact on access to funds), b) the partnership with KCTCS for transfer opportunities, and c) building relationships with school counselors within the 22-county service area.

**Faculty and Professional Staff:** An objective of *The Kentucky Plan* is to increase the number and proportion of African American faculty and professional staff at public postsecondary institutions. Because of a limited pool of potential candidates, and internal institutional variables, the recruitment and retention of African American faculty and staff remains one of the greatest challenges that confront postsecondary education institutions.

Overall, the faculty and professional staff were complimentary of President Andrew's vision, goals, and commitment to diversity. Many felt that he is making positive changes in the university. The chair of the College of Education stated that MoSU has a collaborative relationship with KSU to increase minority student enrollment, as well as faculty hires. While the faculty attending the focus group session noted only a cursory familiarity with *The Kentucky Plan* and the Public Agenda, they expressed their commitment to diversity. The lack of familiarity with the plan and Public Agenda by

faculty and staff identifies a need for training and education by the university – it is difficult for people to support ideas about which they lack adequate knowledge (6 of the 52 attendees said they were familiar with *The Kentucky Plan* and Public Agenda).

One faculty member stated that MoSU is making a greater effort to improve diversity than it did ten years ago. However, the university's diversity efforts are "thin" in the sense that the efforts do not involve a wide variety of university personnel and "shallow" in the sense that they get messages out to the majority of faculty, staff, and administrators. Some faculty believe that diversity ranks fairly low among the administration's priorities, and the attention to diversity by some top administrators is sporadic.

Some faculty suggested, "The campus environment and portions of the larger Morehead community is not comfortable for some African Americans." One African American faculty noted conflicts in their interaction with campus police and student interaction with the financial aid and housing offices. It also was stated that students of color may have legitimate concerns of racism; both students and faculty experience some discrimination, and some African American students feel isolated. One African American faculty commented that the presence of African Americans at MoSU makes an impact on students of color, and encouraged the university community to acknowledge and address the concerns and issues raised in the student forum. Additionally, faculty and staff suggested that a dialogue regarding issues of race and marginalization will be useful in building a more cohesive university community.

Both faculty and staff commented that they are not familiar with a systematic plan by the university to retain African American faculty. Most efforts are self-contained in departments or strategies identified by individuals. They noted that little things are done here and there, but there needs to be a long-term policy approach implemented over time.

Several of the faculty commented that the campus environment has improved since their arrival, emphasizing the increase in African American faculty over the past 2 years. MoSU has a record number of 15 African American faculty members. Several hires are the result of the SREB Doctoral Scholars Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. MoSU's attendance at the institute has been beneficial – two scholars were recently hired, several were invited to interview, and one scholar, currently ABD, is negotiating a position at MoSU.

Although the president has implemented a "president's leadership academy" to expand career opportunities, some faculty and staff believe that opportunities for upward mobility and career advancement are not very promising. Those attending the focus group session suggested that the university realign its support programs and clearly communicate their intent to faculty and staff. These steps will signal faculty and staff that the university is serious about opportunities to advance professionally.



**Academic Deans and Department Chairs:** The deans and department chairs discussed the university's efforts to increase diversity campuswide. Generally, they agreed that MoSU continues to be challenged in terms of recruiting and retaining African Americans. They stated that President Andrew's plan could be effective and believe the budgetary support linked to the diversity plan will be a tremendous help. The dean of education said that the department is working diligently to increase the number of minority students and faculty and described an aggressive plan that is employed by the department. Examples were given to support recent progress toward increased student and faculty diversity. The department brought Dr. Roger Cleveland to the university as a member of the faculty and to provide assistance in recruiting minority students to the school of education. Also, the teacher education program is providing additional resources for:

- Recruitment and hiring of African American faculty.
- Recruitment of African American students.
- Field experiences for students (a summer placement program/field experience in Chicago, Illinois).
- Collaboration with Kentucky State University to recruit minority students into the MoSU graduate program.

Additionally, the university is actively involving a former MoSU athlete and alumni, Mr. Box Miller, to recruit minority students in the northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio, areas. Most deans and chairs indicated that they did not develop individual departmental recruitment plans but relied on the broader plan developed for the university as the basis for their recruitment efforts. At the time of the campus visit, MoSU did not have any African American deans or department chairs. One Latino serves in the capacity of department chair.

One department chair stated that the Morehead community has shown improvements in its acceptance of diversity since he arrived 15 years ago. In that context many students leave having had a relatively good experience and with a positive attitude. The deans and department chairs agreed that limited diversity can be a deterrent to recruiting students and faculty to the campus and the region.

Several deans observed that among MoSU's 15 African American faculty none hold the status of full professor. This assertion did not mean that MoSU had never had an African American faculty member with the full professor status, but the lack of an African American full professor could be sending the wrong message. One chair observed that one department passed over an opportunity to hire an African American faculty member because the person did not appear to "fit" in the profile of the department.

***Undergraduate and Graduate Students:*** Approximately 24 students attended the focus group discussion, which was one of the largest that the committee had experienced.

Students stated that they are primarily attracted to MoSU because of the low-cost tuition but are also influenced by friends and other opportunities identified by the university. Some students said that they have noticed changes since Dr. Andrew's arrival; they believe that he is accessible, engaged with students, and interested in their educational experience. Examples include providing additional resources for the Gospel Ensemble and the Dance Ensemble and integrating more diversity-related courses into the core curriculum. One student complimented MoSU's efforts to allow students to develop leadership skills.

Students identified Morehead 101 as a retention program created for all students, and students are expected to mentor each other. A few students commented that MOSU is providing a quality education, while others identified circumstances that sometimes distract and impede their ability to focus on their academic career.

One student described an unflattering experience with the financial aid office, others discussed experiences with campus police, another voiced concerns about the MOSU shuttle service, and still others stated that the campus environment lacked a positive sense of community.

Students seemed to believe that the university can benefit from a survey of students, particularly those graduating, to obtain their overall view of the university and to see how students will respond to a question about whether they would recommend MoSU to a friend as the place to receive a quality education.

Graduate students viewed the MoSU campus from a much different vantage point. They identified faculty in several departments that they consider supportive; for example, a student stated that there was "great support" from a professor in the Industrial and Engineering Technology department. Several graduate students identified reasons they enrolled at MoSU: convenient to undergraduate athletic scholarships, and the support received from the multicultural student services office.

Finally, students offered the following reasons for MoSU's challenge to broaden the level of diversity in graduate studies: limited activities for diverse groups, no plan to cultivate and recruit MoSU graduates, few competitive scholarships and fellowships, and a lack of diversity among the faculty and graduate program professional staff.

***Graduate Research Programs and Unit Diversity Representatives:*** MoSU has a limited number of graduate programs and a research agenda that is still under development in terms of its direction and the university's expectations. The administrators engaged the team members in an open dialogue regarding their experiences. The programs do not have sufficient funds to develop and implement a formal recruitment program.

There are approximately five graduate assistant program scholarships – the target student group for these programs should be expanded and the programs made more attractive and marketed to underrepresented ethnic and minority groups. Also, there is a need to realign the graduate program admissions requirements to address how departments use test scores.

The graduate school does not recruit from its own undergraduate programs that have diverse student populations. It was suggested that the university should recruit a broader base of individuals earlier in the process and consider developing a collaborative recruitment committee at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Faculty members also should consider taking African American students on recruitment trips to encourage minority students to enroll in graduate programs at MoSU.

Unit diversity leaders commented that there is strong support for diversity at the lowest levels of the university and particularly among much of the faculty. They have noticed that one of the best strategies for student retention is the peer-to-peer tutoring and mentoring programs. The university can benefit by creating opportunities for successful African American alumni to speak or do lectures at MOSU. The university can benefit by greater involvement in the two YMCA Black Achievers programs by naming and supporting an adult black achiever for both programs and encouraging those persons to actively work with the programs and build relationships with students and parents.

**Campus Environment Team:** The Campus Environment Team is charged with identifying strategies and making recommendations to the president about ways to create a supportive and welcoming campus and community environment for faculty, staff, and students. The University Environment Team is a standing committee whose members are appointed by President Andrews. The team membership was broadened to better represent the constituencies across the university and community.

Members of the CEO had dinner with the CET to receive general information about its success in engaging the university community and the local Morehead community in collaborative efforts to improve the campus and town and gown relationships. The CET meets regularly in the spring and fall semesters. The meetings are posted and open to the university community as well as relevant groups, organizations, and partners in the Morehead community.